



**AUDREY GIBSON**  
Minority Leader

**THE FLORIDA SENATE**  
**SENATE DEMOCRATIC OFFICE**

*Location*  
200 Senate Building

*Mailing Address*  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100  
(850) 487-5833

*Professional Staff:* David Cox, *Staff Director*

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

December 11, 2018

The Honorable Rick Scott  
Governor, State of Florida  
Office of the Governor  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

The recent, deeply disturbing news that for the first time in almost 40 years, no African American will even be considered for the State Supreme Court and, therefore, will not be seated on the state Supreme Court, compels us to write this letter asking that you request the Judicial Nominating Committee send forward more names to correct a looming miscarriage of justice.

According to reports, statewide, 84 percent of Florida's judges are white, only 9 percent Hispanic, and a paltry 6.6 percent are African American. Further, during your tenure, not a single African American judge was among your 32 appointments to Florida's five appellate courts.

With the upcoming mandatory retirement of three Justices on our highest court, the list of 11 candidates, none of whom are African American, and the fact that the JNC could have sent forward 18 candidates, we think it prudent that you impress upon the JNC the need for more names to be sent for consideration.

Governor, as you may know, there are more than 3.5 million African American residents in Florida, the third largest state in the union, and you most certainly should care about limiting the diversity of those who will deliver justice to those who have risked everything seeking remedy.

To rectify the imbalance that would exist if the current path is chosen, and to achieve a more diverse court, we call on you to request that the JNC broaden its search and send seven additional names of qualified applicants from which to choose for the pending Supreme Court vacancies, bringing the total to 18 individuals, as allowed by state law.

**BILL GALVANO**  
President of the Senate

**DAVID SIMMONS**  
President Pro Tempore

Governor Rick Scott  
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Though we are aware of your previously stated position to make judicial appointments that reflect your own way of thinking, we believe there are inherent dangers in packing a court with all like-minded justices, which is a most egregious threat to our Country's system of checks and balances and the politicizing of the judicial branch.

Finally, we are reminded of your first inaugural address wherein you stated: "I have been given the great honor of serving ALL the people of Florida...And I am determined to do everything I can...To make real and lasting improvements in the lives of my fellow Floridians." Your legacy, and that of our judiciary, rest on your honoring that commitment to serve ALL of the people of Florida. Diversity in our state Supreme Court is paramount in serving all Floridians.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



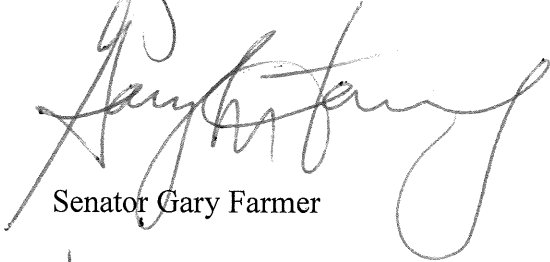
Senator Audrey Gibson  
Senate Democratic Leader



Senator Perry Thurston



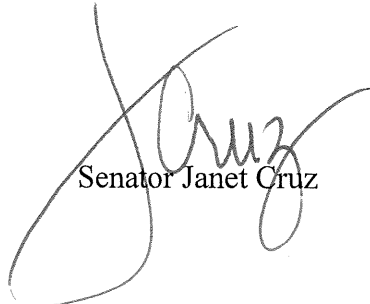
Senator Annette Taddeo



Senator Gary Farmer



Senator Lori Berman



Senator Janet Cruz



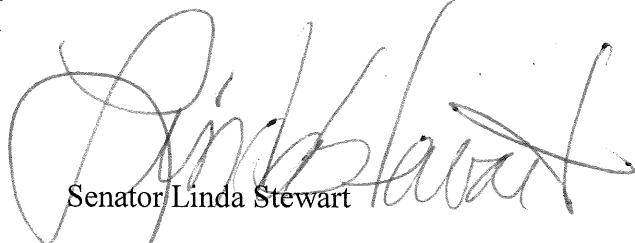
Senator Victor Torres



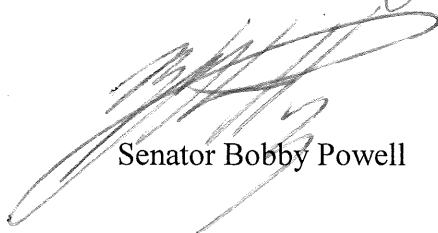
Senator Jose Javier Rodriguez



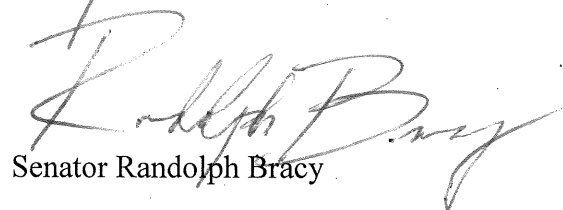
Senator Bill Montford



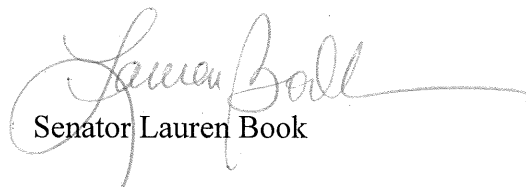
Senator Linda Stewart



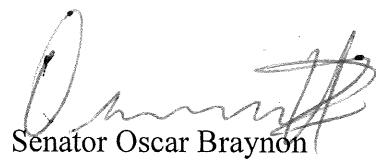
Senator Bobby Powell



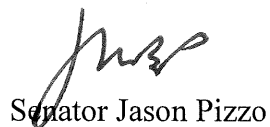
Senator Randolph Bracy



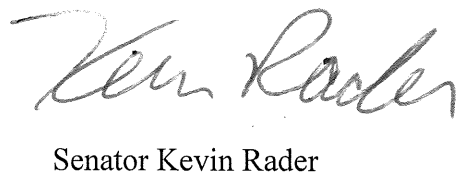
Senator Lauren Book



Senator Oscar Braynon



Senator Jason Pizzo



Senator Kevin Rader



Senator Darryl Rouson